



# The Thoreau Society Bulletin

ISSN 0040-6406

Number 225

Fall 1998

## True Fugitives: On Tomas Tranströmer and Thoreau

Henrik Gustafsson and Niklas Schiöler

**A**rguably the nation's leading poet, Tomas Tranströmer (1931–) is also Sweden's most acclaimed writer abroad. His volumes of poetry have been translated into nearly fifty languages, and he has been named by Joseph Brodsky, Derek Walcott and most recently Wislawa Szymborska as a prime candidate for the Nobel Prize in literature. To date, his national and international awards include the Swedish Pilot Prize (1988), the Nordic Council's Prize for Literature (1990), Germany's Petrarch Prize (1981), and the Neustadt International Prize for Literature (1990). Tranströmer's poetry has also drawn considerable critical attention. In Sweden there are a number of book-length studies of his work, while internationally a score of distinguished journals have profiled Tranströmer's poetry. In the United States, for example, issues of *Ironwood* (1979:13) and *World Literature Today* (1990:4) have been devoted entirely to articles on and translations of Tranströmer. In 1985 a dissertation on his poetry was presented at Berkeley: Joanna Bankier's *The Sense of Time in the Poetry of Tomas Tranströmer*.

Dividing his time between Västerås and the secluded island of Runmarö in Sweden's Baltic archipelago, Tranströmer practiced for many years as a psychologist beside his literary work. In 1990 he suffered a stroke, effectively disarming his speech yet failing to silence his poetic voice. In 1996 his latest volume of poetry, *Sorggondolen* (*The Sorrow Gondola*), was released to unanimous acclaim.

What is the character of Tranströmer's

poetry? A few broad generalizations might be attempted, with the caveat that they inevitably reduce to content what is also form. Tranströmer has long been a poet of sceneries wherein ordinary events and natural surroundings are visualized with remarkable insight and compression. His poetry is also infused, however, with mysteriousness and liberating epiphanies—somewhat akin to what American psychologist Abraham H. Maslow has called “peak experience.” A recurrent theme is thus a quest for clarity (even, perhaps, for transcendence) that is often carried through by giddily daring metaphor. It is perhaps not surprising, given these inclinations, that Tranströmer should display a keen interest in Henry Thoreau.

In his 1954 débüt *17 dikter* (*17 Poems*), Tranströmer dedicates a poem to Thoreau. It is interesting both as an instance of reception and as a poem in its own right. Below we present a translation of “Fem strofer till Thoreau,” followed by a discussion of the poem's traits and background:<sup>1</sup>

### Five Stanzas to Thoreau

Yet another has left the heavy town's  
ring of ravenous stones. Crystal and salty  
is the water merging round the heads of all  
true fugitives.

Here in a slow swirl silence has risen  
from earth's midst, to take root and grow  
and with bushy crown shadow the man's  
sunwarm doorstep.

The foot absently kicks a fungus. A thunder-  
cloud swells on the horizon. Like copper horns

twisted treeroots sound and leaves  
scatter in flight.

Autumn's headlong chase is his light cloak,  
flapping until again from frost and ashes  
calm days have come in flock to bathe their  
claws in spring.

Disbelieved goes the one who has seen a geyser,  
fled the stagnant well like Thoreau and knowing  
thus to vanish deep in inner verdure,  
cunning and hopeful.

*continued on page 3*

## In This Issue

2	Editor's Column	..... Michael Berger
5	President's Column	..... Elizabeth Witherell
6	Notes & Queries	
8	Curator's Column	..... Susan Godlewski
9	Oliver's “Going to Walden”	..... John Chamberlain
10	Thoreau and Houghton Mifflin	..... Wesley T. Mott
	Encyclopedia of American Poetry	..... Joel Myerson
11	Additions to the Thoreau Bibliography	..... Michael Berger
12	Calendar	

## Editor's Column

Michael Berger

Since this is the first issue of the *Bulletin* under my editorship, I will step out from behind the editor's royal "we" and say a few words of personal greeting.

The *Thoreau Society Bulletin*, and the Thoreau Society, are said to be the longest running entities of their kind devoted to an American literary figure. Throughout this century there has been an enduring and growing interest in Henry D. Thoreau. There are various good reasons for this continuing response and enthusiasm. I will note a few.

There is, of course, the beauty and grace of Thoreau's writing. His writing also calls forth a lively introspection and examination of one's own life and of the health and ways of the society in which one lives. It is impossible to enjoy Thoreau's words for long in the abstract. He speaks to urgent questions of how to live and what to live for very pointedly and at the same time elegantly. Legion are the people he deeply influenced who have then shaped the world in significant ways, such as Gandhi, King and Carson, and many others. His voice is sometimes difficult to hear, but if one ever feels scolded or judged, one also feels that here is a fellow who takes a lively interest in the most important things for the best reasons, which is a kind of ultimate respect a writer can pay a reader. If he does not always make the most affable society, he is reliably the best companion for the best in us. Wherever a human being fronts essential facts, other human beings will be interested in the report. Thoreau fronted lots of them, and gave a fair report of much of what he saw. His hardy independence and cussedness against the conventional grain are healthy tonics. And yet, his earnestness is also redeemed by sparkling wit and good humor. His diving deep into spiritual pilgrimage stimulates and encourages. His insight into environmental and ecological problems and dynamics was amazingly prescient and is increasingly pertinent. His philosophical importance has not been sufficiently noted: he was, among other things, a serious scientific researcher who also maintained a poet's outlook and voice, and his grappling with the tensions and problems involved in striving to do

justice to both was courageous and quite suggestive for us today when the methods and products of science are increasingly dominant cultural forces. In all this, Thoreau shows ways to right some of the deep imbalances of modern culture and to heal some of its ills, and to celebrate and cultivate some of the inherent possibilities of human life in any cultural context.

For these and other reasons, I'm delighted to take on the editing of the *Thoreau Society Bulletin*. Like many members of the Society, I first read Thoreau's words in my youth. I caught the bug, appropriately, reading *Walden* during one of many family camping trips to the woods. I am if anything more impressed as time flies by with the beauty of Thoreau's artistry and the importance of Thoreau's message to the world.

Some can spend a lifetime studying Thoreau and still not be satisfied that they've plumbed the depths of what he meant by his life and writings. One who did devote a lifetime to Thoreau studies was the late Walter Harding, the longtime editor of this bulletin and guiding spirit of the Thoreau Society. There is seemingly no one alive today with Walter's depth and breadth of knowledge about Thoreau and for that reason, and because he was a splendid human being, he is dearly missed. Although I cannot hope to aspire to Walter Harding's funds of knowledge, I am acutely aware of his long association with this bulletin as its magisterial editor, and do hope to take inspiration and guidance from his accomplishments and example. I'd also like to recognize the indefatigable Brad Dean, whom Walter entrusted with the editorship when he stepped down from it, and who has done and is doing so much to disperse knowledge about Thoreau's previously unknown late natural history writings, chiefly by the agency of books, Web sites, and talks. Tom Harris, the Society's sedulous Executive Director-of-all-things-at-once, has pitched in to sustain the *Bulletin* in the transition and will continue to be a great help as I get going as editor. I'm grateful to Tom, and to Karen Merrill, our Graphic Designer and Illustrator, and the other good folks whose hard work and careful contribu-

tions produce the *Bulletin*.

I hope this bulletin will continue to serve in important ways by acting as an organ for the flow of information and communication between members of the Thoreau Society, and by publishing brief but significant pieces of scholarship and thoughtful reflection, as well as keeping tabs on scholarship and journalism about Thoreau as these continue to flourish. The regular features of the *Bulletin* you are used to will continue, and I hope to be able to bring you an interesting array of articles with each issue. There will be a regular flow of information for purposes of Society housekeeping and development; regular columns by the President, the Curator of the collections of the Thoreau Institute, the Director of the Media Center at the Thoreau Institute, and the Director of Education Programs at the Institute; occasional updates from the Publications Committee, book reviews, and Notes from Thoreau Country with information about preservation and conservation efforts in Concord and other places associated with Thoreau; as well as the Calendar, the Notes and Queries section, and Additions to the Thoreau Bibliography in each issue, and other occasional features.

I heartily thank President Beth Witherell and the members of the Board for entrusting me with this pleasant duty. I will try to carry it out in a professional manner, but also in the true amateur spirit, which is to say (turning to the root meaning of the word, as Thoreau so often does) with love for the subject and love for the work.

And so, for now I will retire back behind the anonymous editorial "we" and wish you all good reading, of the *Bulletin* and especially of HDT.

Could a greater miracle  
take place than for us to  
look through each other's  
eyes for an instant?

Walden

First published in 1951 as a contribution to *BLM* (*Bonnier's Literary Journal*), the poem has since undergone a reduction from eight stanzas to five—to trim away “juvenile sections” as Tranströmer has stated.<sup>2</sup> The original title had an evident Horatian ring: “Ode to Thoreau,” and while Tranströmer later opted to drop this title he did retain the meter: the verse in Swedish is Sapphic in both versions. (We have not attempted a rendition in Sapphic above.)

According to Tranströmer’s own testimony, he was first alerted to Thoreau via Frans G. Bengtsson’s Swedish translation of *Walden*, which had initially been published in 1924 to a small audience. In 1947, however, a new edition was presented.<sup>3</sup> *Walden* now appeared with woodcuts by Stig Åsberg, and the forty-page foreword by Bengtsson—comprising the latter’s Master’s thesis on Thoreau and the Transcendentalists—was retained from the first issue. The foreword was positive, even panegyrical, and served particularly to contrast Thoreau with Emerson: philosophically, stylistically, practically—and all to Thoreau’s favor. The new edition caught the young Tranströmer’s attention, and fueled an intense interest in Thoreau.

What does Tranströmer’s poem to Thoreau convey? To begin with, it purposely gives only a deflected portrait. Thoreau does not appear as a corporeal self, and neither does the portrayed environment strive for identity with Concord. Rather, the poem progresses by likeness and inspiration: the escape from civilization, the immersion in woodland and pure water, the meditation by a sunny doorstep—all recall Thoreau’s *Walden* experiences as depicted in his book, approaching but not claiming paraphrase.<sup>4</sup> Another important tangency is the seasonal progression, which closely resembles that of *Walden*. The second stanza of the poem hints at a spring scenery, with lush foliage shadowing the man under it. The third stanza then abruptly ushers in autumn (perhaps due to a mistaken kick), as leaves are scattered. The fourth stanza, finally, establishes the reign of autumn until the return of spring.

The reader will note that a dramatic swerve occurs in the third stanza. The calm, even serene succession of events described earlier is here abruptly jolted by

a seemingly innocent act. The careless violence to a fungus apparently causes the surrounding environment to cry foul, thus eliciting a parallel reaction on a larger scale: wind tears, leaves fall, and autumn arrives like an Angel of Death. One critic has even suggested that the fungus and thundercloud allude to the billowing cloud of a nuclear explosion.<sup>5</sup> While this may be a tendentious extrapolation, a crisis of some magnitude is obviously unleashed at this point (and it might well allude to a dangerously careless attitude toward nature). The crisis is only soothed in the closing stanzas, when spring returns and the poem’s persona regains faith in an “inner verdure,” a faith effectively depicted as the geyser contrasted with the stagnant well.

The importance of place, of a source and pivot-ground, comes across strongly in both *Walden* and Tranströmer’s poem. In an interview at Runmarö in 1972, Tranströmer maintained that

I have a notion that every person has a center of gravity in a given place. Like a marble that rolls around until it finds the deepest point where it can rest. For me that place is here. When I stand on this bridge looking out over the water, I feel that this is my starting point.<sup>6</sup>

In most of Tranströmer’s poems geography is utilized without reference to specific map names or spatial boundaries. It is generalized and objectified, yet without loss of descriptive precision. In “Five Stanzas to Thoreau” elements of three distinct landscapes are included. Thoreau’s *Walden* environment blends with Tranströmer’s autobiographical Runmarö: both are surrounded by woods and water (Runmarö’s water, however, is salty) and both are centered by a simple wooden cottage. Furthermore, traces of a Tranströmer journey to Iceland in 1951 may be seen in the likening of roots to “copper horns” in the third stanza, and more obviously by the geyser in the fifth.

Indirect portraiture and landscape affinities notwithstanding, Tranströmer’s poem gains much of its impetus and coherency by appropriating Thoreau’s philosophy and rhetorical method of persuasion. It thus operates in large measure by positing opposites: country versus

town; life versus death (in the spring—greenery as against the frost and ashes of autumn and winter); growth versus stagnancy (the swirling, spurting water of a geyser and the expansion of greenery as contrasted to the frost and stagnant, rocky well); receptivity (to the gifts of nature) versus ravenousness; faith versus disbelief. Further, an organic correspondence between man and nature is established by the poem’s strategy of both humanizing nature (stanzas 1 and 3) and naturalizing the human (stanzas 4 and 5). Nature’s agency gives man access to his “inner verdure,” where everything connects and corresponds. The threat to this unity is caused by an absence of proper human empathy toward nature and the natural.

Tranströmer’s affinity with Thoreau’s thinking, however, is arguably made most explicit in the three “apocryphal” stanzas from the first version of the poem. A since deleted second stanza evokes the difficulty of radical dissent within established bounds. Much like the protagonist of *Walden*, it raises natural/rhetorical barriers (“sunsmoke” and “wood’s edge”) to ward off the constrictions of society:

Sunsmoke stands by wood’s edge, far from these thorny trees of social life where many pairs of pioneer’s wings have been torn asunder without mercy.

Probably realizing the feebleness of the hackneyed images, Tranströmer later opted to discard these lines. The antithesis between a benevolent tree (with “bushy crown shadow[ing]”) and a metaphorical, “thorny” wood was thereby lost. At the same time, Tranströmer’s choice enhanced one of the poem’s central tenets: that of the tree’s connotation of contemplative stillness.

The original sixth and seventh stanzas utilize a favorite Thoreauvian image—ascending smoke—and the largely intimate character of the preceding stanzas is transformed into a public scene:

People have gathered in cold spring evening  
burning their lungs like leaves in a bonfire  
“air is invisible, thus nonexistent according  
to reason.”

The smoke ascends, yet someone recalls that those having lost track in blizzards of blissful fire sometimes glimpsed in the mist lean quadruped shadows.

A Walpurgis Night gathering here blends the traditional burning of leaves with a burning of lungs. While this may partly allude to Thoreau's personal fate, it is also an indictment of positivistic philosophy. In the words of distinguished Tranströmer critic Kjell Espmark, the sixth stanza "contains a critique of the narrow-minded rationalism that denies what is not readily seen .... While a tribute to the Transcendentalist Thoreau, it is also a discrete contribution to the [then] lively Swedish debate over religion, and an intimation of the nature-lover's faith in a divinity as evident as the air."<sup>7</sup> To the grounding of this faith one might add the geyser, which in the following stanza stands as a prime example of a reality at once elusive and readily apparent.

Granted that the sixth stanza can be read as a refutation of the anti-metaphysical, the compact seventh shows how some of the rationalistic disbelievers around the flames cannot entirely ignore what lies latent "in the mist," whether this be a surprising and vigorous geyser or a more threatening power. The latter's ominousness is indicated by the wolf-like "quadruped shadows." (The reader will also note the oxymoron "blizzards of blissful fire" in this passage, which recalls a favorite Thoreauvian rhetorical device, the paradox.<sup>8</sup>)

Tranströmer's poem to Thoreau is naturally not an original effort. There have been scores of poems (even volumes of poetry) written in his honor. What perhaps places Tranströmer's poem in a minority group is its incorporation of crisis. It does not rest content to assess Thoreau and his achievements from a historical vantage, or resort to doggerel panegyrics. Instead it presents a struggle with problems and opportunities still alive to us today. That Thoreau helped alert us to them is without doubt. Under such circumstances, the deflected portrait is surely appropriate. For while we have listened, we have still to front our facts; still to front the Thoreau urging us to consider them. How should we dare look him in the face?

1. Earlier translations have been made by Grace Hunter in *The Western Humanities Review* (1954:2), 86; by Robin Fulton in *Tomas Tranströmer: Collected Poems* (Oxford: Bloodaxe Books, 1987), 22; and by May Swenson in *Tomas Tranströmer: Selected Poems 1954-1986*, transl. Robert Bly et al., ed. Robert Hass (New York: Ecco Press, 1987), 6. In all cases but Hunter's the standard five-stanza version is presented.
2. Information on the poem's genesis and the author's relationship to Thoreau was given in interview. (Tranströmer to Niklas Schiöler in late May and early June, 1998.)
3. *Skogsliv vid Walden* (Stockholm: Wahlström & Widstrand, 1924 and 1947). Bengtsson (1894-1954) was a scholar and translator with a marked interest in American and English literature. He was soon diverted

from this field, however, by a remarkable success as writer of historical novels and essays. He did not write on Thoreau beyond his Master's thesis, though a famed passage on an ant battle in a later essay clearly recalls the insect skirmish in *Walden*.

4. A sentence early in the "Sounds" chapter of *Walden* amply illustrates the various tangencies: "Sometimes, in a summer morning, having taken my accustomed bath, I sat in my sunny doorway from sunrise till noon, rapt in a reverie, amidst the pines and hickories and sumachs, in undisturbed solitude and stillness." Quoted from *Walden*, ed. J. Lyndon Shanley (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1971), 111.
5. See Magnus Ringgren's "De två ensamheterna. Kring en linje i Tomas Tranströmers lyrik," in *Tidskrift* (1977:4), 26.
6. From an interview by Åke Lundqvist in *Dagens Nyheter* of July 22, 1972.
7. Quoted from Espmark's *Resans former. En studie i Tomas Tranströmers poesi* (Stockholm: Norstedts, 1983), 183.
8. See, for a similar example, Thoreau's "A Winter Walk," where "the snow lies warm as cotton or down upon the window sill." Quoted from *The Portable Thoreau*, ed. Carl Bode (New York: Penguin Books, 1985), 57-58.

[Editor's note: Henrik Gustafsson's article, "Henry Thoreau and the Advent of American Rail," appears in the Fall 1997 Concord Saunterer.]

## 1999 Annual Gathering

July 8-11, 1999 • Concord, MA

Join Thoreauvians from around the world for a celebration of the 150th anniversary of the first publications of "Civil Disobedience" and *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*.

### Main Speaker: Arun Gandhi, grandson of Mohandas Gandhi

We are currently working on the workshop schedule for the 1999 Annual Gathering. If you would like to present your original research on "Civil Disobedience," *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*, or the influence of "Civil Disobedience" on social movements, please send a brief proposal to Tom Harris, Executive Director, The Thoreau Society, 44 Baker Farm, Lincoln, MA 01773-3004; by fax to (781) 259-4760; or by e-mail to [ThoreauSociety@walden.org](mailto:ThoreauSociety@walden.org).

## President's Column

Elizabeth Witherell

Tom Harris received 326 votes on the proposed bylaws: 302 members voted in favor and 15 were opposed; 9 ballots could not be counted because they did not contain a vote. The Board of Directors has voted unanimously to accept these new bylaws, so they are now in effect. Bylaws are always a work in progress: at the next Board meeting, in January, I will establish a Bylaws Committee to receive and discuss suggestions about the bylaws.

I know that I've filled a good deal of space in this column in the last year discussing the governance of the Society—bylaws, voting, nominations, committees. It's more fun for me to write about Thoreau, and I imagine it's more fun for you to read about him, too. But sharing the work of running the Society with the members is a high priority, and we're all learning together what's involved in the procedures established by the new bylaws. I'm sure that after we've gone once through these procedures they'll become routine and we'll all take less notice of them.

The call for nominees for the Committee on Nominations and Elections produced four excellent candidates, as you will have seen by now. Please take the time to read the nominees' statements and choose three for the committee, and then mail your marked ballot back to the

Thoreau Society by December 18. The Board will choose two of its own members for this committee, to bring the total committee size to five; Tom Harris will provide staff support.

This Committee on Nominations and Elections will create the slate for the 1999 elections, and they will need your help in doing so. Six positions on the Board of Directors will be open: four members of the Board complete their terms in 1999 and the Board voted in July to add two new members.

The Committee will issue a call for nominations, and it's not too early to begin thinking about whom you might want to nominate. My column in the Spring 1998 *Bulletin*, which describes the work of the current Board, will give you an idea of the skills the Society needs in its Board members. In addition to being dedicated to the Society's mission to stimulate interest in and foster education about the life, works, and philosophy of Thoreau, a Board member must be able to travel to Concord twice a year at his or her own expense, and must be able to contribute to the operations and services of the Society. We now have a very active publications program; in addition to the Annual Gathering in Concord, we hold special events; we have a successful business oper-

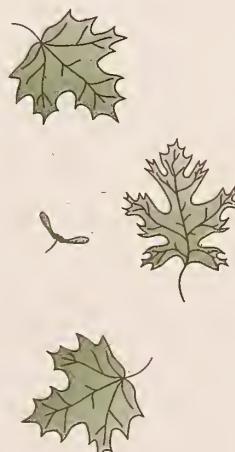
ation in the Shop at Walden Pond; and we contribute to the Thoreau Institute's education program. As you think about good candidates for Board positions, keep these efforts in mind. You may nominate yourself or someone else.

I'm very pleased to announce that with this issue, Mike Berger takes over the editorship of the *Bulletin*. This publication has a history of capturing its editors—Walter Harding established it in 1941 and edited it for fifty years, and Brad Dean has been the editor since the Summer 1991 issue. I hope Mike will find himself enthralled as well, and will enjoy his work as much as Walt did and Brad has.

As I welcome Mike, who has introduced himself in another column in this issue, I want to take the opportunity to thank Brad for his dedication to the Thoreau Society and particularly to Walt's idea of a publication that would communicate with Thoreauvians everywhere. In Walt's last column, he wrote that he looked forward to the improvements he knew Brad would bring to the *Bulletin*: if you look at a run of *Bulletins* from 1991 to the present, you'll see that the face of the publication has become more modern and that photographs have been added, but that Walt's spirit continues to be honored in the tone and content.

*Sometimes a mortal feels in himself Nature, not his Father but his Mother stirs within him, and he becomes immortal with her immortality. From time to time she claims kindredship with us, and some globule from her veins steals up into our own.*

*I am the autumnal sun,  
With autumn gales my race is run;  
When will the hazel put forth its flowers,  
Or the grape ripen under my bowers?  
When will the harvest or the hunter's moon,  
Turn my midnight into mid-noon?  
I am all sere and yellow,  
And to my core mellow.  
The mast is dropping within my woods,  
The winter is lurking within my moods,  
And the rustling of the withered leaf  
Is the constant music of my grief.*



## Notes and Queries

The following letter came from Marjorie Harding following the Grand Opening of the Thoreau Institute.

"I would like to thank Mr. Don Henley, Ms. Kathi Anderson, Mr. Brad Dean and all the others who made the Thoreau Institute possible. I am sure that my husband, Walter Harding, would be very happy in the permanent home that his research papers and books have found and it would not have been possible without the vision of Don Henley and for that I am very grateful. The gala opening on Friday was an experience unmatched by any other in my life and I wish that Walt had been alive to see it. I thought the video, *Remembering Walt*, was marvelous and I would like to thank all the many, many people who made all that possible."

The Thoreau Institute held an open house on Sunday, 18 October. Two hundred fifty local residents toured the new research facility and talked with staff.

Robert Galvin reports that the Boston Athenaeum now stocks recorded books and it has a copy of Kenneth Cameron's *American Great Ones/Hawthorne, Emerson and Thoreau*, donated by the author. He also reports that a real estate agent in his neck of the woods is advertising a house in Wayland, Massachusetts, at \$1,285,000, which property is supposedly "mentioned in Thoreau's Journals of 1851." As Bob is not currently in the market for any house costing more than \$28,125, he hasn't bothered to check the reference.

Steve Ells of Lincoln, MA mentioned that he saw an excellent NH Public TV production (15 min—it may have been an excerpt) of *A Week*, produced by NH Crossroads series, he believes. The piece was good on multi-level meanings.

Ralph Black writes that *American Poetry Review* 27:6, Nov.–Dec. 1998, p. 15, prints two poems by David Wagoner that members might find interesting: "Thoreau and the Body" and "Thoreau and the Toads." A volume of Thoreau poems in the works? Wagoner's last book of poems was *Walt Whitman Bathing*.

Joel Myerson sent an amusing cartoon from the October 16 issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, showing a professor and several students seated around a seminar table. The expressions on the students are worth seeing and hard to describe; gazing blankly comes to mind, although that might not be altogether fair. The professor looks up from a piece of paper held in his hand and says, "Even if Thoreau *had* had a cellular phone at Walden Pond, I'm certain he would have used it only in an emergency."

A tip for savvy traveling American Renaissance scholars: "Writer and philosopher Henry David Thoreau once wrote that the present moment is composed of the meeting of two eternities, the past and the future. At Renaissance Hotels and Resorts the present is a perfect blend of traditional hospitality and contemporary luxury." In proof of which, we have a full-page glossy advertisement from the Marriott Company, displaying the very best in Thoreauvian luxury.

Katmai Henry David Thoreau, UD, a member for many years, is a Chesapeake Bay Retriever. He completed the requirements for The American Kennel Club's Utility Dog title on June 5th. The Utility Dog title is the highest obedience title offered by the AKC. Only about 3 or 4 Chesapeake Bay Retrievers earn the title in any given year. He earned the three qualifying scores in three straight trials between May 23 and June 5. Since then, he and his owner have been relaxing by swimming in Bermuda and hiking portions of the Appalachian Trail. Unfortunately, he cannot follow in the footsteps of his namesake up Mount Katahdin—dogs are not allowed in Baxter State Park. Canine members do receive full membership benefits but must pay the individual rate.

In the October 1998 issue of *Sky*, Delta Air Lines' inflight magazine, a headnote to a book excerpt mentions Thoreau. The book is *North of Now: A Celebration of Country and the Soon to Be Gone* (The Lyons Press) by W. D. Wetherell (with an "e," no relation we guess). The excerpted passage from the book discusses the Wetherell

family's adventures in the quiet of TV-less living. The editor's headnote ventures the following: "One senses that Henry David Thoreau—himself of New England, himself a writer and thinker who actively excised what he deemed irrelevant to his harmonious living—would like this volume . . . Its essays and meditations are a provocative reminder of how short and precious the time is, and how important the search, to locate what we are most likely to hold dear."

Society member Stefano Paolucci writes from Italy about coming across a door in the town of Frascati upon which a nameplate read "Associazione Culturale Henry D. Thoreau." It turns out that the association members who came to the door were conscientious objectors inspired by Thoreau's essay "Civil Disobedience," and that they knew nothing more about the work of their society's namesake than this essay. The members of the Associazione Culturale Henry D. Thoreau were surprised to learn that Thoreau had authored other works. Stefano observes (with some disappointment) that Thoreau's reputation in Italy is mainly that of a political theorist, and he goes on to say that a publisher recently printed "Civil Disobedience" and "Life without Principle" in its "Anarchists" series.

A homegrown American political activist, a former president of the SDS (Students for a Democratic Society), also hearkens back to Thoreau for inspiration and principles. In Todd Gitlin's history/memoir, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage*, Thoreau is mentioned several times.

Ed Durbin remembers seeing several years ago a copy of plans for building a duplicate of Thoreau's cabin at Walden Pond. He believes it appeared in an issue of *Early American Life* or a similar publication, but he can no longer find the magazine or the plans. Does anyone have or know a source for such plans? If so, please contact Mr. Durbin at L. Edward Durbin, 620 S. Roberts Rd., Dunkirk, NY 14048-3137; or by e-mail to <durbin@cecomet.net>.

Sighthor Orn Runarsson, a philosophy student at the University of Iceland, Reykjavik, is writing a B.A. thesis on Thoreau's concept of the Wild, especially as it appears in "Walking." The author would be grateful for any suggestions for books or essays related to this subject. If you can help, please write to Sighthor Orn Runarsson, Grenibyggð 24, 270.

Mosfellsbair, Iceland, or by e-mail to <johannamos@islandia.is>. Sighthor is also translating "Walking" into Icelandic, and we hope to see it published some day.

Further east, in Riga, Valdis Abols, a Latvian diplomat, is working on a translation of *Walden* into Latvian. The first version is finished, and the translator is now busy trying to polish the language. This is thought to be the first translation of a Thoreau work into Latvian. The translator will be grateful for contact with American-speakers who can possibly help with rendering the delicacies of Thoreau's language and style, and in clearing up linguistic uncertainties the translator hasn't been able to resolve. Mr. Valdis Abols can be contacted at Lubanas iela 123-27, LV-1021 Riga, Latvia or by e-mail at <herbe@latnet.lv>.

The debut issue of a new World Wide Web magazine, *Literary Traveler*, entitled "The Nature of New England," contained two articles about Thoreau that are both linked to [www.walden.org](http://www.walden.org). This issue of *Literary Traveler* can be found on the Web at [www.literarytraveler.com/newenglandindex.htm](http://www.literarytraveler.com/newenglandindex.htm)

The Center for a New American Dream issues regular invitations via the Internet to look in on and participate in monthly online conversations about various topics related to how we live and what we live for. Recent monthly-conversation topics have included "Television, Commercialism, and Consumption," "The Overspent American," "Celebrating the Holidays Responsibly," "Simplicity and Spirituality," and "Commercialism and What We Might Do About It." To subscribe, just send e-mail to [majordomo@crest.org](mailto:majordomo@crest.org) and in the body, write "subscribe conversation-digest". The kickoff statement for the current month's conversation may be sampled on the Web at <http://www.newdream.org/discuss>. A \$30 annual membership in the Center includes subscription to *ENOUGH!*—A

*Quarterly Journal on Consumption, Quality of Life and the Environment*. The Center for a New American Dream may be contacted via mail at 6930 Carroll Avenue, Suite 900, Takoma Park, MD 20912; by phone at 301-891-3683; by fax at 301-891-3684; and by e-mail at [newdream@newdream.org](mailto:newdream@newdream.org). Executive Director is Betsy Taylor.

In a recent issue of an on-line publication called *Netfuture: Technology and Human Responsibility* (#79, 27 October 1998), whose author, Stephen L. Talbott, produces incisive critiques of the fallacies and downsides of Internet technology, there is a brief discussion of "technological incursion[s] into modern life," headed by this quotation from Thoreau's Journal (21 January 1853): "Nobody sees the stars now. . . . Though observatories are multiplied, the heavens receive very little attention. The naked eye may easily see farther than the armed. It depends on who looks through it. No superior telescope to this has been invented. In those big ones the recoil is equal to the force of the discharge." *Netfuture*, a publication of The Nature Institute, is available through free subscription on the Web (yes, this is an irony but not a disqualifying one; the postings are extremely intelligent and interesting) at [www.oreilly.com/~stevet/netfuture/](http://www.oreilly.com/~stevet/netfuture/). New postings occur roughly every two weeks.

Former Thoreau Society member Howard Zahniser will be honored November 7, 1998, when the Zahniser Institute for Environmental Studies will be dedicated at his alma mater, Greenville College in Greenville, Illinois. Keynote speaker for the dedication ceremony will be former U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson (D-Wisc.), founder of the original Earth Day and now counselor of the Wilderness Society, according to Institute Director David D. Patrick, Jr.

Zahniser was the primary author of the 1964 Wilderness Act, which established the National Wilderness Preservation System. The Wilderness System now protects 104 million acres of wilderness on federal public lands. Zahniser served as executive secretary and later executive director of the Wilderness Society from 1945 to his death in 1964. Zahniser served as honorary president of the Thoreau Society for 1956-1957. As editor of *Living*

*Wilderness* magazine, he worked closely with the late Walter Harding to promote protection for Walden Pond and environs. (For more on Howard Zahniser, see the article by his son Ed Zahniser, "In Wildness' To Wilderness—and Now Back Again?" in the Spring 1998 *Thoreau Society Bulletin*.)

The Institute was established in 1995 and located on the Greenville College campus. Among its goals are to educate in the areas of sustainable use and management of natural resources and public lands, particularly wilderness and wildlands, according to Patrick. The Institute will also work to promote the preservation of unique and wild places, Patrick said, and to integrate an ethic of environmental stewardship into the conservative moral constructs of our society.

The Institute will work in habitat creation and restoration projects, natural resource inventories, environmental education programs, environmental research, and wilderness and wildlands advocacy. It will also sponsor conferences and symposia on these issues.

For information write to:  
David D. Patrick, Jr., Director  
Zahniser Institute for Environmental  
Studies  
315 E. College Avenue  
Greenville, IL 62246

Austin Meredith spotted a reference to Thoreau in a *New York Times* "Critic's Notebook" column of 26 August 1998 (p. B8). In "The Weed That's Wowing New York," New York chefs are described as currently preferring the common wild purslane, the kind Thoreau mentioned in the "Economy" chapter of *Walden*, over human-bred domestic varieties. The plant has many uses as a garnish, topping, or sauce ingredient. Austin notes, however, that the *Times* writer who quotes from *Walden* may have ignored a salient ingredient in the context of Thoreau's discussion of this plant, as Thoreau recommends it as a staple within a simple diet, rather unlike the haute cuisine in which the New York chefs are reviving its use.

Again from the *New York Times* (24 Sept. 1998, p. B9), Mr. Meredith reports on a book review by Christopher Lemann-Haupt about Chris Goodrich's *Roadster*, which relates the author's experience in

## Curator's Column

Susan Godlewski

### Henley Library, Thoreau Institute: Overview

This is the first of what I expect to be regular columns in the *TTS Bulletin* from the Curator to the Thoreau Society membership that will deal mainly with the research collections and the activities of the Henley Library. I am pleased to have a regular means of communication with the membership. We have embarked on a tremendously exciting project and need your continued participation to ensure its ongoing success.

The Thoreau Institute opened with much fanfare on June 5th. It was a very exciting and satisfying day that generated much wonderful publicity and goodwill. As a result, the subsequent two months have been busy with the daily appearance of numerous researchers and visitors from all over the country. This week (July 27th-31st) alone, we have had guests from Pennsylvania, Washington, Iowa, New Mexico, Texas, Rhode Island, Ohio, Florida, and Renteria, Spain as well as many visitors from Massachusetts. It is extremely gratifying to see such interest in the Thoreau Institute and the collections, even while we are still unpacking and organizing.

Starting in late September, the staff will begin to catalog the research collection utilizing the OCLC bibliographic utility. For those who have access to OCLC, the Institute's identifier will be TIW. This is a complex project that will take many years to accomplish, primarily because of the large amount of material to catalog, the various formats comprising the collections, and the limited staff at the Thoreau Institute. Please be patient. We will complete this task as quickly and efficiently as possible. In the meantime, if there are materials that you believe are in the collection and need to see, please do not hesitate to contact me either by telephone at 781-259-4730 or by e-mail at Susan.Godlewski@walden.org.

For those who would like to visit in person, we are suggesting a call to me to make an appointment. The reason is simple. If I am on vacation, at a workshop, or even just out-to-lunch, there is no one else

to help you or allow you access to the Reading Room or collections. Also, until the collection is organized and catalogued, it is more efficient to discuss your research needs with me in advance so that I can have materials prepared for your arrival or refer you to another institution that could better satisfy your research needs. The Henley Library is open by appointment on Monday-Friday, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. There are no weekend or evening hours. The collection is stored in a closed-stack, environmentally controlled wing and does not circulate beyond the Henley Library. Photocopy and photography facilities are available.

### Collections

The Henley Library houses a comprehensive collection of research materials relating to Thoreau's writings, life, time and contemporaries, as well as materials relating to present-day environmental and human rights issues. Three collections, gifts of former Thoreau Society presidents, comprise the core of the research collection. These three collections are owned by the Thoreau Society and leased, housed and made accessible to scholars by the Thoreau Institute.

**The Walter Harding Collection:** Professor Walter Harding (1917-1996), founder of both the Thoreau Society and the Princeton Edition of *The Writings of Henry D. Thoreau*, introduced Thoreau to more people around the world than any other individual. Donated to the Society by his family, the Harding Collection consists of approximately 12,000 titles and includes books, periodicals, manuscripts, offprints, reprints, pamphlets, maps, art, records, microfilms, realia, and an extensive correspondence with leading Thoreau scholars and world-renowned figures.

**The Raymond Adams Collection:** Professor Raymond Adams (1898-1987) was a pioneering Thoreau scholar and the first president of the Thoreau Society. The Adams Collection offers researchers an excellent core of Thoreau manuscripts and first editions; volumes that Thoreau

owned and consulted in his research and writing; irreplaceable correspondence from Thoreau's acquaintances written to early biographers, and the entire Thoreau collection of biographer H.S. Salt.

**The Roland Robbins Collection:** Archaeologist, researcher, and writer Roland Wells Robbins (1908-1987) identified, excavated and documented the site of Thoreau's Walden house in 1945-46. Donated by his family, the Robbins collection contains his field notes, photographs and artifacts of the Thoreau site, as well as material related to his other excavations and restorations in the eastern United States. Also included are Robbins's research materials and drawings for the replica of Thoreau's house, soon to be placed on the Institute grounds.

The Thoreau Institute also houses the Thoreau Society material that the Concord Free Public Library stored and made available to researchers for the Society for a number of years. Included in this grouping is the priceless Maxham daguerreotype as well as significant manuscript holdings. In addition, the book collection from the Thoreau Lyceum can be found in the Thoreau Institute's Education Center.

Next issue: The latest acquisition by the Thoreau Institute: The Scott and Helen Nearing Papers.

I think that the change to some higher color in a leaf is an evidence that it has arrived at a late and more perfect and final maturity, answering to the maturity of fruits, and not to that of green leaves, etc., etc., which merely serve a purpose. The word "ripe" is thought by some to be derived from the verb "to reap," according to which that is ripe which is ready to be reaped. The fall of the leaf is preceded by a ripe old age.

*Journal, 12 November 1858*

# Hurry Up or Wait: Oliver's "Going to Walden"

John Chamberlain

[Editor's note: John Chamberlain is an English teacher in Lexington, MA, who has developed a curriculum to introduce middle school students to Thoreau. His students' work was on exhibit for the Thoreau Institute Grand Opening. Mary Oliver's poem is reprinted here, followed by Mr. Chamberlain's commentary.]

Copyright 1972 by Mary Oliver. Used by permission of the Molly Malone Cook Literary Agency.

## Going to Walden by Mary Oliver

It isn't very far as highways lie.  
I might be back by nightfall, having seen  
The rough pines, and the stones, and the clear water.  
Friends argue that I might be wiser for it.  
They do not hear that far-off Yankee whisper:  
How dull we grow from hurrying here and there!

Many have gone, and think me half a fool  
To miss a day away in the cool country.  
Maybe. But in a book I read and cherish,  
Going to Walden is not so easy a thing  
As a green visit. It is the slow and difficult  
Trick of living, and finding it where you are.

Mary Oliver's poetry is delightful in earthy and mystical ways. Her poem "Going to Walden" graced the Thoreau Institute's Opening Day printed program. To those of us who have spent idle time this summer or perhaps time idling, I offer this analysis of her poem.

Beginning casually with the pronoun "it," the poem's mood moves from conversational phrasing to pointed commentary as she cites Thoreau. The second stanza goes back to a breezy tone and then moves to close with penetrating conviction. It is these shifts in intensity from the social to the mystical that fire this poem.

The poem is not replete with images of nature that often line her poems. Instead, it is a reasoned argument about what it means to go to Walden. Within the brief space of two six-line stanzas, she conducts this debate. Reasons for a physical trip are

described by friends: Walden is conveniently close by highway, it provides an opportunity for personal reflection—even wisdom!—amid its natural beauty, as well as a needed getaway to the "clear water" of the "cool country."

Of course, Oliver has the last word. She counters with her reasons for not paying her "green visit," though really she redefines what it means to "go to Walden." She posits Walden as not just a physical place, but as an inner symbol for the simple and mystical awareness of the present. It is a place waiting, as philosopher Ken Wilber

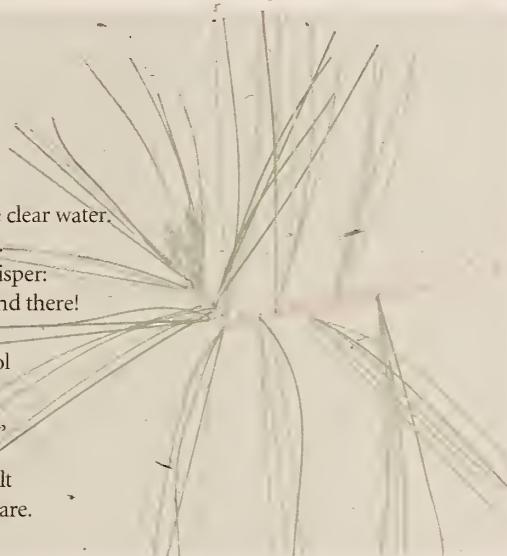
clear, as we impatiently hurry about. She debates wisdom—is it determined in a social group, even among friends, or defined and tested in a different crucible, by oneself? Is wisdom the opposite of folly, or broad enough to include it?

The contrasts continue. There are two directions of moving: hurrying horizontally, staying on the surface, compared with being "where you are," and from there traveling inwardly, along a vertical axis. There are two speeds: moving fast, doing and doing, versus moving slow, just being. In travelling, we look for shortcuts—physical tricks, so to speak—but the "trick of living" is the ongoing metaphysics of questioning our untrue states of mind in meditative awareness. Lastly, going to Walden is not just "a green visit...back by nightfall," but personal evolution, a lifetime's journey. As Oliver says, it's "not so easy a thing." Something to reflect on during our daily commute.

## Notes & Queries, from page 7

putting together an automobile kit. The review compares *Roadster* unfavorably with *Walden* and *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, and asserts that its author failed to do what Simone Weil and Henry Thoreau both succeeded to do—they "altered their lives radically to explore the true meaning of work."

Also from Austin Meredith: the second annual National Conference on Civil Disobedience will be held January 23 and 24, 1999, at American University in Washington, DC. This conference, geared toward the activist, will present numerous workshops in the general categories of Strategy and Case Studies. The list of presenters includes Coleman McCarthy, the well-known pacifist who wrote for the *Washington Post* for over 25 years, who will give a workshop entitled "How to Radicalize Your Life." Registration is \$10 prepaid, \$15 at the door. Information and registration forms are available from the National Conference on Civil Disobedience, 4519 Alton Place NW, Washington, DC 20016; or by e-mail at [nisha@igc.org](mailto:nisha@igc.org).



puts it, "always and already" inside of us, something to be uncovered by negating all that is "not Walden." The "difficult trick of living" is to reveal this Walden, as this indestructible, inner sanctuary is easily resisted and avoided.

The distinction between the inner and outer Walden is implied in Thoreau's words from "Walking": "In wildness is the preservation of the world." The word "wildness" is often misquoted as "wilder ness." A people in communion with their inner wildness will support the preservation of their outer wilderness.

Oliver uses words that contrast to create a tension that produces meaning. While Walden is "not far" as a place, the "far-off Yankee" Thoreau is distant in time and his simplicity far from our awareness. The speaker's friends argue and can't hear his whisper. We grow dull, not wise or

# Thoreau and Houghton Mifflin: An Historic Bond Revived

Wesley T. Mott

For over a hundred years, the venerable publishing firm Houghton Mifflin Company has been associated with standard editions of the works of Emerson and Thoreau and with important bibliographical and interpretive studies of the Transcendentalists. Until Princeton University Press began issuing new critical texts in *The Writings of Henry D. Thoreau* with *Walden* in 1971, Thoreauvians were well served by Houghton Mifflin's 20-volume *Walden* or Manuscript Edition of *The Writings of Henry David Thoreau* (1906).

Now an exciting new Thoreau Society project reunites Henry Thoreau with his historic publisher. Beginning with three titles in Spring 1999, Houghton Mifflin, in partnership with the Thoreau Society, will publish a series of books presenting the thoughts of Thoreau on a variety of

important topics, some with which we readily associate him, some perhaps surprising even to his longtime admirers. The first three topics and their editors, all Society members, are Education (Martin Bickman), Mountains (J. Parker Huber), and Science (Laura Dassow Walls). Future topics will include Freedom/Slavery (Jeff Cramer), Land (Joe Valentine), and Water (Robert France). Each book will include an introduction by the expert volume editor as well as a preface by an outside authority.

"How many a man has dated a new era in his life from the reading of a book," Thoreau wrote in *Walden*. The thematic focus of these compact, inviting books is designed to appeal to the Thoreau aficionado as well as to attract new readers. An engineer, poet, teacher, naturalist, lecturer, and political activist, Thoreau truly

had several lives to lead, and each one speaks forcefully to our day. Selections will be drawn both from familiar published works and from less well-known lectures, letters, and journals.

Titles and editors for this series have been selected by the Thoreau Society Publications Committee: Tom Harris, Ron Hoag, Karen Merrill, and Wes Mott, with help from Kathi Anderson, Brad Dean, Joel Myerson, and Beth Witherell and with the guidance of Houghton Mifflin senior editor Harry Foster. Royalties from the series will go to support the operations of the Society. Look for announcements of publication and new titles in future issues of the *TSB*.

## Book Review: *Encyclopedia of American Poetry*

Joel Myerson

Eric L. Haralson, ed. *Encyclopedia of American Poetry*. Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1998. xiii, 536 pp. \$95.00.

In recent years there has been a spate of encyclopedias and dictionaries of American literature and its genres. Most are disappointing collections of previously-available materials, and few are as good as Wesley T. Mott's *Biographical Dictionary of Transcendentalism* and *Encyclopedia of Transcendentalism* (both Greenwood Press, 1996). It is therefore with pleasure I report that the *Encyclopedia of American Poetry* is one of those few, good collections.

The genesis for this book was the Library of America's two-volume edition of *American Poetry: The Nineteenth Century* (edited by John Hollander, 1993), for which this book was planned as a companion volume (all page references for the poetry cited here are to the Library of America text). Not all of the Library of America authors are included, but most are, including such summary chapters as those on spirituals, American Indian poetry and songs and ballads. Nearly all our favorite Transcendentalists are here,

including Bronson Alcott, Charles Timothy Brooks, Ellery Channing, Christopher Pearse Cranch, Emerson, Margaret Fuller, Thoreau, and Jones Very; also included are the usual suspects, such as Holmes, Longfellow, and Whittier. There is good coverage of minorities and women (though Caroline Sturgis Tappan fails to make this book, just as she failed to be included in the Library of America). The contributors are of a high quality, such as Jeffrey Steele on Fuller, Helen Deese on Very, and Elizabeth Hall Witherell on Thoreau. The entries contain both biographical information and critical interpretations of the poetry, usually including general comments about the major themes and directions of an author's career. Even authors not usually thought of for their poetry—such as Hawthorne or Melville—are included. The entries end with suggestions for further reading.

Witherell's essay on Thoreau continues her series of fine, intuitive works establishing the case for serious consideration of Thoreau as a poet. As she reminds us, Thoreau "served his literary apprenticeship as a poet, composing almost three-

quarters of his 200 poems . . . before 1845," when he began writing *A Week*. Witherell describes the phases of Thoreau's poetic career and relates them to his prose works (*A Week* begins Thoreau's "apprenticeship in prose," just as *Walden* "announced to the world that he had found his voice in prose"). This is an ideal short but informative summary of Thoreau's poetic goals and career.

Anyone interested in nineteenth-century American poetry will enjoy this book: it is an excellent reference work and even holds the potential for enjoyable browsing.

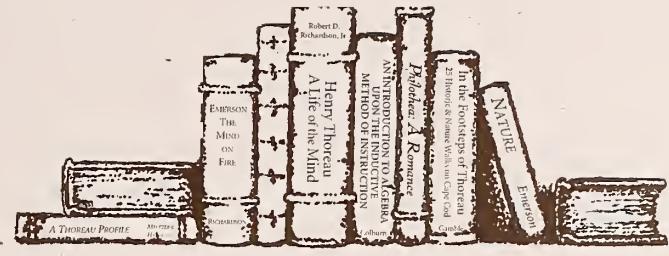
Joel Myerson  
University of South Carolina

*Each more melodious note I hear  
Brings this reproach to me,  
That I alone afford the ear,  
Who would the music be.*

HDT

# Additions to the Thoreau Bibliography

Michael Berger



Fresonke, Kris. "Thoreau and the Design of Dissent." *Religion and the Arts: A Journal from Boston College* 2:2 (1998): 221-241.

"Improving the Nature of Walden Pond." *Erosion Control* (Nov.-Dec. 1998). Contributor received article from an Internet listserv, without author or page numbers; suggests libraries in major metropolitan areas may get the magazine.

Johnson, William, Jr. *What Thoreau Said: "Walden" and the Unsayable*. Moscow: U of Idaho P, 1991.

———. *What Thoreau Said: "Walden" and the Unsayable*. Review: *American Literature* 70, no. 3 (1998): 672-673.

Kingsolver, Barbara. "The Forest in the Seeds." In *High Tide in Tuscon: Essays from Now or Never*, 236-42. New York: HarperPerennial, 1996. A vibrant and insightful appreciation of Thoreau's *Dispersion of Seeds* by a renowned novelist and essayist who has pursued advanced studies in ecology. "Faith in a Seed" is infused with Thoreau's delight, his meticulous curiosity and his inspiring patience. Across the silence of 125 years, during which an unforeseeable glut of hurry has descended, he exhorts us to slow down and take notice, to learn how to watch seeds become trees. . . . What a life it must have been, to seize time for this much wonder. If only we could recover faith in a seed—and in all the other complicated marvels that can't fit in a sound bite. Then we humans might truly know the glory of knowing our place."

Littell, Alan. "Walking Cape Cod's Beaches in the Footsteps of Thoreau." *Home News Tribune* (East Brunswick, New Jersey), 20 September, 1998.

Lemieux, Pierre. "Uncivil Disobedience." *Liberty* 8, no. 6 (1995): 43 - 45.

Marshall, Ian. "Contact! Contact! A Walk to Thoreau's Ktaadn." Chapter in *Story Line: Exploring the Literature of the*

*Appalachian Trail*. UP of Virginia, 1998.

Mulloney, Stephen. *Traces of Thoreau: A Cape Cod Journey*. Boston: Northeastern UP, 1998.

Schofield, Edmund. "Henry & Me: From Worcester to Walden to Worcester in the Footsteps of Henry David Thoreau." *Worcester (Massachusetts) Magazine*, 3-9 June, 1998, 10-15.

Shay, Kevin J. "Preserving Life in the Woods at Walden Pond." *Dallas Morning News*, 3 May 1998. A travel piece on Thoreau related locales.

Thoreau, Henry D. *The Maine Woods*. Portland, ME: The Ascensus Press, 1998. 238pp. Only 50 copies published. 32 cm., bound in full green goatskin, blind-stamped rules on side, spine in gilt, binding by Gray Parrot, set in Linotype Bulmer, illustrated with 5 pen and ink drawings by Jon Luoma, printed from line blocks. The paper is handmade by McGregor & Vinzaini.

Slipcased in a box made from Maine white pine. This will be the most typographically elaborate edition of a work by Thoreau published to date. The edition is already part sold, though no prospectus has yet been prepared. It is anticipated that the entire edition will go out of print quickly, at the price of \$1500 per copy. Interested buyers may contact Wilsey Rare Books: phone (914) 657-7057; fax (914) 657-2366; e-mail <erd@ulster.net>; Web site at <http://www.clark.net/pub/wilsey>.

Van Anglen, Kevin. "Reading Transcendentalist Texts Religiously: Emerson, Thoreau, and the Myth of Secularization." In *Seeing Into the Life of Things: Essays on Literature and Religious Experience*, edited by John L. Mahoney, 152-70. New York: Fordham UP, 1998.

———. *Simplify, Simplify and Other Quotations from Henry David Thoreau*. Review: *Etudes Anglaises* 51, no. 1

(1998): 114-115.

"Walden Revisited." *American Way*, 1 July 1998, 64-69. A photo-essay in the American Airlines magazines. Photography by Doug Merriam.

We are indebted to the following for information sent in for this bulletin: T. Austm (Rochester, NY), B. Dean, T. Harris, P. Huber, J. Moldenhauer, R. Schneider, K. Shay, K. Van Anglen, R. Winslow III, and B. Witherell. Please keep Michael Berger (7823 Shadowhill Way, Cincinnati, OH 45242; e-mail <bergermb@email.uc.edu>; fax 513-791-5180) informed of items he has missed and new items as they appear. If possible, please also include or send a copy of the book, article, or other item, so that it can be preserved in the Thoreau Society's collection at the Thoreau Institute.

**S**ilence is the universal refuge, the sequel to all dull discourses and all foolish acts, a balm to our every chagrin, as welcome after satiety as after disappointment; that background which the painter may not daub, be he master or bungler, and which, however awkward a figure we may have made in the foreground, remains ever our inviolable asylum, where no indignity can assail, no personality disturb us.

# Calendar

## January

Massachusetts

**24** Sunday

4:00 p.m.

Thoreau's Transcendental Natural History  
Elizabeth Witherell  
Concord Museum

In March 1853, prompted by a question in a formal letter from the secretary of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Thoreau characterized himself and the researches in natural history that he had begun just a few years before and that he continued into the winter of 1861.

"The fact is," he wrote in his Journal, "I am a mystic—a transcendentalist—and a natural philosopher to boot." Beth Witherell, Editor-in-Chief of the Thoreau Edition and President of the Thoreau Society, will talk about how Thoreau grounded the "word for Nature" that he spoke and wrote in his practice of Transcendental natural history.

Sponsored by the Thoreau Society, Thoreau Institute, and Concord Museum. Free and open to the public.

## February

Massachusetts

**24** Wednesday

7:30 p.m.

"Nature in Words"  
Christopher W. Leahy

Writing about the natural world is fraught with pitfalls. It lends itself all too readily to sentimentality, solemnity, and one-note arias of awe.

Author/naturalist Christopher Leahy will read some examples of what he considers to be the best and the worst of the genre.

Christopher W. Leahy, Director of Massachusetts Audubon's Center for Biological Conservation, is author of *Birdwatcher's Companion* (Hill and Wang), *First Guide to Insects* (Houghton Mifflin), *An Introduction to Massachusetts Birds* (Mass. Audubon), *An Introduction to Massachusetts Insects* (Mass. Audubon), *The Nature of Massachusetts* (Addison-Wesley), and many popular articles on all aspects of natural history.

**Nov. 12. The first spring-kling of snow, which for a short time whitens the ground in spots.**

**I do not know how to distinguish between our waking life and a dream.**

**Are we not always living the life that we imagine we are?**

**Fear creates danger, and courage dispels it.**

**There was a remarkable sunset, I think the 25th of October. The sunset sky reached quite from west to east, and it was the most varied in its forms and colors of any that I remember to have seen. At one time the clouds were most softly and delicately rippled, like the ripple-marks on sand. But it was hard for me to see its beauty then, when my mind was filled with Captain Brown. So great a wrong as his fate implied overshadowed all beauty in the world.**

Journal, 12 November 1859

*The Thoreau Society Bulletin* is published quarterly by the Thoreau Society.

**Editor**, Michael Berger

**Board of Directors:**

Kenneth Basile; Ronald Bosco; Robert Galvin; Joseph Gilbert; Jayne Gordon; Ronald W. Hoag, Treasurer; John Mack; Wesley Mott; Joel Myerson, Secretary; Thomas Potter; Daniel Shealy; Shirley Van Glay; Elizabeth Witherell, President

**Executive Director** ..... Tom Harris

**Bookkeeper** ..... Karen Kashian

**Graphic Designer/Illustrator** ..... Karen Merrill

**Shop Manager** ..... Jon Fadiman

The Thoreau Society, Inc., is an international not-for-profit organization founded in 1941 to stimulate interest in and foster education about the life, works, and philosophy of Henry David Thoreau.

To fulfill its mission, the Society:

• supports programming for the Thoreau Institute, in partnership with the Walden Woods Project;

• sponsors various Thoreau-related excursions and events throughout the year;

• owns and operates the Thoreau Society Shop at Walden Pond, a visitor's center with a bookstore and gift shop located at the Walden Pond State Reservation;

• holds a four-day annual gathering each July in Concord, Massachusetts; and

• publishes the *Thoreau Society Bulletin*, *Concord Saunterer*, and other Thoreau-related material.

Membership in the Society includes subscriptions to its two publications, *The Concord Saunterer* (published each autumn) and the *Thoreau Society Bulletin* (published quarterly). Society members receive a 10% discount on all merchandise purchased from the Thoreau Society Shop at Walden Pond and advance notice about Society programs, including the annual gathering. Contact the Thoreau Society administrative offices in Lincoln, Massachusetts, for membership information (address below).

### Thoreau Society Directory

Communications relating to *The Concord Saunterer* should be addressed to Ronald Wesley Hoag, Thoreau Society, Inc., Department of English, East Carolina University, Greenville, NC 27858-4353, U.S.A.; tel: (252) 328-6580; fax: (252) 328-4889; e-mail: enhoag@ecuvm.cis.ecu.edu.

Inquiries about merchandise (including books and mail-order items) should be directed to Jon Fadiman, Shop Manager, Thoreau Society Shop at Walden Pond, 915 Walden Street, Concord, MA 01742-4511, U.S.A.; tel: (781) 259-4770; fax: (978) 287-5620; e-mail: Shop@walden.org.

All other inquiries and communications should be directed to the Thoreau Society, Inc., 44 Baker Farm, Lincoln, MA 01773-3004, U.S.A.; tel: (781) 259-4750; fax: (781) 259-4760; e-mail: ThoreauSociety@walden.org.

[www.walden.org](http://www.walden.org)